

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAM-01 SCCT-01 DHA-02 /063 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5318

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: POLICE ARREST ETA MURDERERS OF BASQUE INDUSTRIALIST

REF: MADRID 2839, MADRID 2739

1. THE INTERIOR MINISTRY ANNOUNCED YESTERDAY, 12 APRIL, THAT IN THE LAST FEW DAYS 87 PERSONS BELONGING TO ETA HAVE BEEN ARRESTED, AMONG THEM 3 MEMBERS OF THE ETA COMMANDO UNIT WHICH MURDERED KIDNAP VICTIM ANGEL BERAZADI. A FOURTH MEMBER OF THE UNIT IS STILL AT LARGE.

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2. THE POLICE ALSO DISCOVERED AN ETA SAFE-HAVEN IN A BASQUE

VILLAGE CONTAINING ARMS AND EVIDENCE INCRIMINATING IN THE BERAZADI CASE. THE 3 MEMBERS ARRESTED HAVE REPORTEDLY CONFESSED TO THE KIDNAPPING AND MURDER OF BERAZADI AND ALSO TO THE KIDNAPPING OF JOSE LUIS ARRASATE (KIDNAPPED LAST JANUARY AND RELEASED 36 DAYS LATER AFTER PAYMENT OF A SUBSTANTIAL RANSOM). THEY NAMED AN ETA LEADER RESIDENT IN FRANCE, MIGUEL ANGEL APALATEGUI AYERBE, AS THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR ORDERING BOTH THE KIDNAPPING AND THE SUBSEQUENT MURDER OF BERAZADI.

3. AMONG THE OTHER ETA MEMBERS ARRESTED WERE REPORTEDLY THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MURDER OF A POLICEMAN LAST OCTOBER. A DOZEN HIDEOUTS AND MUCH AMMUNITION AND PROGAGANDA WERE DISCOVERED AS WELL.

4. AMCONSUL BILBAO REPORTS THAT HIS INITIALSAMPLING OF PUBLIC OPINIONPRODUCED TOTAL OPPOSITION TO ETA'S MURDER OF BERAZADI, WITH NO ONE TRYING TO JUSTIFY IT. THOUGH THERE WAS ALSO SOME FEELING AGAINST THE ANNOUNCEMENT BY INTERIOR MINISTER FRAGE THAT THE GOVT WAS NOW AT WAR WITH ETA, THUS FAR THE GOVE HAD CLEARLY COME OUT AHEAD, DUE PARTLY TO THE PUBLIC REVULSION AT THE MURDER OF A WIDELY-RESPECTED MAN AND APPARENTLY PARTLY TO GREATER SELECTIVITY ON THE PART OF THE GOVT THAN IT DISPLAYED IN THE LAST LARGE-SCALE ROUNDUP OF PRESUMED ETA MEMBERS LAST AUGUST. AMCONSUL BILBAO NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE CONTINUED WIDESPREAD USE OF GUARDIA CIVIL CHECKPOINTS ALONGSIDE ROADS MAINTAINS THE BASQUE SENSE OF LIVING IN AN OCCUPIED COUNTRY. DEATHS OF INNOCENT MOROTISTS THROUGH HAPPENSTANCE AT THESE CHECKPOINTS (10 APRIL THE GUARDIA CIVIL MACHINEGUNNED A CAR WHICH APPARENTLY RAN A CHECKPOINT INADVERTENTLY, AND THE 28-YEAR OLD DRIVER LATER DIED IN HOSPITAL) COULD PRODUCE THE BACKLASH THE GOVT IS EAGER TO AVOID.

5. IN THE MEANWHILE DOZENS OF BASQUE SEPARATIST BANNERS (SOME BEARING ETA INSIGNIA) CALLING FOR THE CELEBRATION OF A "BASQUE NATIONALIST DAY"THIS EASTER SUNDAYHAVE CONTINUED TO APPEAR THROUGHOUT THE BASQUE PROVINCES.
STABLER

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